12/6/67

Dear Ray,

Should your gall rupture again, by all means waste the money for special delivery. However, there is none in the country. We get one mail a day and at that time our outgoing mail also leaves. So, to baby you -for you are quite a baby- I'll drop everything as soon as I finish this, make a special trip to town and mail it.

You are also remarkably selfish. All of us are and to a degree must be, but you are extreme.

You are the man who displayed the remarkably poor taste of telling me just how close to God and entirely unique Mark is, on our first meeting, and the man who simultaneously was silent about his plagiarisms. There have been many, and about each and every one you have also been silent. In this you have not been alone, but that does not excuse you, especially in the light of the charges you now make. Were you not silent, for example, about some of the quite dishonorable things in the Playboy Lane interview, where you had personal knowledge? I will not bore you with a list as long as slight thought will disclose to you.

If I try and give credit, I am damned. If I do not, I am double damned.

Now let me quote the words of the man who has been totally silent on all of the so many occasions he has seen attributed to others what I first published:

"What is the meaning of your ~~firm~~ betrayal of your firm commitment to me... that you would not challenge my claim to the earliest discovery of the double head hit?" I am not aware that it happened. I have in every case of which I am aware, and this by now includes a number of radio broadcasts and private phone calls, said you and I separately and earlier reached the same conclusion, by different means, and that you told Thompson about it. As you know, because I told you, I did not discover it until about April 1966. I published it in WWII, pub date of which was 12/2/66. Generally speaking, when publishing is at issue, it is the pub date that counts. I do not and I have not raised any such issue, in any way, except, perhaps, to a mind sick with jealousy. I have on every occasion I can recall said that you separately made the same discovery.

Is there anything in either of my letters to dispute this, or to deny you priority of discovery, if that means so much to you? I am unaware of it if there is.

That you may have made this discovery earlier I do not now challenge nor have I in any way. Where did I? And what the hell kind of a crack is it in this sentence to insert, "after being a guest in my home"? Should I be as petty and child ish as you and say "we can eliminate that in the future"? What is the relevence?

Do you for one minute think that if I did or intended anything sinister in either of those two letters I'd have immediately sent you a copy? And where is the copy of your letter to Emerson? Did I ever write and chide you for not extending the same courtesy?

What the hell is there to "retract"? Will you please specify the new

juvenility that so distresses you? Are you asking that I apologize for being the first to publish this?

Were I a saint, as I most assuredly am not, I's still have to say that you try the patience of a saint. What am I to do or say in return? If I told you what I think is more than justified, there'd be another breech among us, and there are already too many. I assume we all have serious objectives and each in his own way and in his own capacity will do what he can to achieve these objectives.

The only time I hear from you is when you have some such petty - and in this case I think nonexistent- gripe.

Need I remind you the time I take to try and keep you people out there informed and informed of what I am doing and what I have learned? I carried at some risk and considerable exertion, a briefcase loaded with documents you out there had not seen, so you could see and copy them. Among the extra costs were the ruin of a briefcase that I cannot replace for $150.00. Such things do happen on airplanes. Had I not wanted to bring you all up to date, it would not have happened. Maggie will tell you that I left them with her for her to copy what she wanted. Is it possible for me to be more open, more cooperative, to more jeopardize my own selfish interests? Who else has ever done this among us? I also corresponded with Maggie about it in advance.

But particularly in the face of your own silence when this has happened so endlessly with me and has hurt me so, does your tirade come with poor grace. You, who in my home, abused me by telling me all the great things that Lane first had done, when none of it was true, as you then knew. Remember, Ray, that the last of my first book was finished and in the mail to the "publisher" with whom I then had a contract by mid-February 1965, and that part of its success was due to the pirating of my material and appearances and part to my silence about it. Sometime, if you'd like, when you are here, you may see my files on this, including my correspondence with both Lane and Holt. You, in silence, let Lane do these things to me, and many more of which you know, knowing also that I alone among those who have written on the subject have defended him where I believe he can be defended.

Now be so kind as to send me your letters of protest to Popkin, the NYReview, or Avon, over what Popkin did, about which I have also been silent. I'll play you the tape recording of the request made to me before publication of his book that I sue so they could exploit their publicity. If you have further interest, I'll show you the identical errors in footnotes and the identical editing of long excerpts of testimony.

How can you possibly be so indifferent to the feelings of others as you so religiously are? You chide me for such trivialities (that really are non-existent) and make demands upon me when I have such serious worries and problems that I alone among us have. I have my fifth book ready for publication, have for two months, and do not dare going farthur that, the more than $30,000 I am already in debt and you throw such chickenshit at me? I work on this every day of the week, with no social life at all, sometimes with no sleep at all, and my wife has made even greater sacrifices, and you are without protest when others steal my work or take credit for it, thus robbing us both, and all you can bother me about is some false inuendo your vanity or jealousy read into something?

Why do you think I wrote Mooney the day after I got home, tired as I was, and with all the accumulations of three weeks added to the existing backlog, on a holiday when others were relaxing and enjoying themselves? Why do you think I wrote Mooney, not for publication, rather than Emerson, for publication? Is this the way, had I such intent, to "steal" something from you? Why do you think I went to the

trouble, took the time, to write you and others, and to the expense of phoning Maggie, which, little as it cost, took money I do not have. Is this some kind of devious plot to defraud you. And why do you think I went sleepless and then took the long time required for such a letter to Jack McKinney. Is there some subtle theft from you involved in that, too. Is there anything in either of these letters, if you can be rational, that you can honestly say is in any manner a selfish thing I did or sought. Is it not obvious that in each case I instead jeopardized the relations I had with each person and organization.

As you have tried to help me in small ways, so I have tried to help you. You certainly know there is nothing you could ask of me within reason that I would not do. I have, because I am closer to the Archives, gotten whatever anyone asked of me. I have voluntarily offered specific documents when I knew they were appropriate to the work of others. I have even asked others if materials I had that I thought could be of value would interest them. I continued to so this even after some of the things I did on a basis of confidence, intending publication in context, appeared first because of it in the works of others. Most of the people I deal with are honorable people, and I'd rather help them and run some risk in so doing so that we may all come closer to achieving what we all want. I have gone out of my way to credit others, even making mistakes in so doing because I cannot possibly hold all this small stuff in my mind. When I conceived WHITEWASH III to be my last work, I wrote everyone else in the field with whom I had friendly relationship asking for references and credits to others to add (and got not a single, meaningful reply).

Because you so severely criticize me, may I ask that you show me one other who has published who has done this.

Whether you like it or not, mine was the first published source of all the essential material and of almost all of it. For this I do not apologize, nor need I credit anyone else. You certainly know that I published the double-head hit before you told me you also knew of it. I have accepted your concept of its importance and of the fact that you discovered it earlier. What more can I do, or what more can you decently expect of me. Did I not encourage you to add my material to your ms to make it more complete. Is this because I am trying to steal or steal credit from you. Did I not offer to have an artist do a real job on your manuscript, at no cost to you, and, if necessary, to arrange its ~~xxxxxxxx~~ publication. Did I not tell you what I could about distribution. If I have not placed it in more places, it is because I was not able to get to more. But I have not spoken to a single bookstore about my books without speaking of your monograph. I have had time to speak to very few.

Ray, I tell you frankly and directly, you should be ashamed of yourself. And I am distressed to find you so willing to make uninhibited demonstration of such pettiness, which is first without warrant and additionally is demeaning.

But let me invite you to make demonstration of your own good faith by sending me copies of those letters, whether many or few, that consistency could seem to demand of you.

If you ever write me in this vein again, I will not answer.

I have taken another glance at your letter. Please explain this sentence: How xen you possibly justify doing <u>precisely</u> that which you clearly and unmistakably promised not to do (your letters to Mike Mooney of the Saturday Post and the Jack McKinney...".

If you mean I should not have written them I do not think I promised not to. The McKinney thing did not arrise until the late afternoon of the day before I

wrote. I phoned his producer to try and arrange not a show on my New Orleans book but the airing of Jim's speech (by your concept, I presume this, too, was selfishness). I then told her about you, your monograph, how to get in touch with you, etc. For it was then I learned they were airing Thompson that night. As you know, I had not had a chance to read the SEPost version while I was in Calif. I read it on the plane back. I believe all of you underestimated what he is really up to, and I informed all of you what my analysis is. Even if I had promised not to write the Post (perhaps I did, I do not recall), I think you should understand that after I read the piece and understood what was involved, I had to write.

I repeat, I am distressed and disturbed to find you so utterly selfish and self-centered, so small and so narrow-and so oblivious of the feelings of others.

Sincerely,